



HILL CLIMBING TRAINING FOR BUSY PEOPLE

Introduction

Let's face it, the majority of us are not blessed with infinite time to ride and train yet our mortal bodies try and achieve endurances that elite or professional cyclists do!

As the Team Practitioner for the Huon Salmon Genesys Wealth Pro Team for the past two years and with other elite and professional cyclists that we see, I often gain further insight to their training regime and requirements in the course of treating them.

Go figure this: on a 'relaxed' week they do 400-450 km per week, on a full intensity week between 900-1200 km and on a tapering week between 700-800 km.

The majority of us would either be divorced, thrown out of the house, disowned by the kids or on the dole if we tried to do this kind of training!

So what's the secret for us mere mortals? The answer lies in strategic planning and physiology. Read on!

Scope The Following

Cycling is about strategy and planning and if you just ride blindly in your bunch ride or social ride, chances are you may not be aware that you need to do the following for each ride:

1. Estimate the distance you wish to cover for the ride;
2. Calculate roughly the time you have taken for that distance;
3. Understand the terrain you are riding and by this I mean approximate gradients and collective heights of the climbs. Best read through the



myriad of wireless and or GPS enabled computers or Apps that you can download for your respective smartphones.

4. What is the traffic management situation where you are riding?
5. What is the wind direction on the day of your ride?

By following the basics of the above, you are ready now for the next phase of your BUSY PERSON HILL CLIMBING TRAINING!

Determine The Following

1. Find a inclined road with a gradient between say between 4 to 8 degrees to ride on;
2. Make sure that this is within 5 km from your home so that you are not in trouble when you run out of time!
3. Ensure that it is not a busy road at the time of day so that the risk associated with this suburb training route is minimised. By that don't be stupid and train during the times when all of us parents are rushing our kids off to school in cars and school buses and when others are trying to get to or from work.
4. Do a reconnaissance ride of the route mapping out the desired distance for the particular LOOP. Finding a loop basically means that you will be doing some form of repeats during this training.
5. A distance of between 2-3 km per loop is ideal.
6. The terrain of the loop should involve a serious climb of the gradient indicated above as well as possibly some undulations as opposed to flats.
7. The terrain of the loop should also have some form of recovery area where you can continue riding as you gain your breathe and also continue movement without stopping.
8. Also choose the route that perhaps allows variation of wind direction which changes in the course of the day.

Conditioning Training Methodology

Once all of the above has been scoped and determined and you have got the map route on one of your Apps or GPS / wireless enabled bike computer you are ready to train.



1. Time yourself and give yourself 45 minutes to do this first training program.
2. Make sure you warm up first for about 10 minutes generally through an undulating or flat terrain remembering that cyclists ride to warm up and not do passive stretches to warm up until they finish the training or ride.
3. Do the selected loop at your Hardest gear (see picture) and the smaller of the two Chain rings.
4. Repeat this twice.
5. Do the distance firstly as a seated hill climb and the second with a variation of seated and standing hill climb.



6. The Hardest gear is chosen because simply you are working now towards the conditioning of your muscle groups which are by this stage warmed up from the warm up phase of 10 minutes and with minimal or no lactic acid.
7. Ride slowly and control your ascend with this gear and using your quadriceps and hamstrings to do the alternating push and pull with your cleats.
8. If you ride up hills without using the push and pull method with your cleats you are therefore riding inefficiently and will be establishing a wrong



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- balance in your musculature that will lead to probably hip and knee imbalances and injuries.
9. Once you have achieved this twice, treat yourself to the next easiest gear and repeat the same loop twice (see picture)



10. Don't forget to also adopt the recovery phase of the ride by riding on that flat section to catch your breath and also to drink. Remember always drink when you are riding and training and should be regulated to every 15 minutes. If you feel thirsty before you drink, you are ALREADY dehydrated and it will affect performance and the lubrication and recovery of your muscles and ligaments.
11. By this stage after the fourth loop, you will be thankful that you have gone to the easier gear.
12. Repeat the same and do the fifth and sixth loop on yet an easier gear. Once again take guidance from the picture below.



13. After you have done six loops, you will be closely watching your watch or your timer to see if you have reached the 45 minute mark.
14. If you have done this, try and get one more loop out of yourself but this time do VARIATION between the gears that you have worked on.
15. You will finish off this last loop remarking to yourself how 'easy' it was to do the climb up the hill.
16. In short you have achieved the start of muscle conditioning and hill climbs training for busy people!
17. If you have time to spare (which you should not unless you were sprinting up the hill which is WRONG) do two more of these loops but with one more easier gear before the final variation gearing.
18. The 5 km or less to your home now comes into play as you work towards during a quick sprint training ride home, fresh and happy to:
 - a. Change the diaper;
 - b. Help organise the kids for school;
 - c. Romance your partner (do wash up first);
 - d. Get organised for work;
 - e. Feed the dog / cat....you get the drift...

Variations for Training

With the fundamental program above in place these are the variations for training development:

- a. Time



Start off with 45 minutes and build in 15 minutes intervals for 1 hour leading up to say 1.5 to 2 hours.

To keep to the plan this may mean that you start earlier so you finish on the required and appointed time.

b. Time of Day

Choose the time of day carefully as this has not only traffic implications which you should avoid so that risks are minimised.

The wind direction changes between early morning and evening can also be a training variation. If you trained the same distance during the morning with the wind behind your back (tail wind) as opposed to a head wind, you will be working harder and using up more energy but you will also be building your resistance and conditioning yourself for riding against the wind.

Dams Challenge riders, remember that there is a 20 km head wind ride from Armadale to the Freeway entrance and although it is 'flat' the head winds have been the most demoralising factor of the ride for many who thought this was the easiest part of the ride.

c. Terrain and Different Loops

Unless you are a diehard gym junkie (which most cyclists are not) you will be probably looking for that 'other' location or route to do the training.

Variation here could include:

- (1) Increasing the distance of each loop gradually. Should be no more than 10-20% of your last distance;
- (2) Increasing the total amount of elevation you have to achieve;
- (3) Looking for a nearby higher hill to accomplish this. Perth is FLAT but not really that flat not to train. You can still accomplish major results without



having to harass the poor residents of Crystal Brook Road each and every day!

d. Positions

You can also develop strength and still allow for muscle stretching and conditioning by varying the positions on and off the saddle in three ways.

The three ways include: Seated hill climbs, hovering off the saddle (touching with the bum muscles) and standing hill climbs. All three required for serious hill climbing ability in the long run.

Remember the chest open position and not flexed forward over the handlebars either as your lungs will otherwise hate you and punish you by opening up the upper lobes and forgetting about the all-important lower ones which also help recruit the diaphragm.

Don't

1. Don't be a silly rider and ride and train up the hills with your big chain ring. This is the fastest way towards a knee injury and associated lower back injury. Trust me – this is the biggest presenting complaint I have clinically from the big chain ring monsters riding out there with no clue! The majority of rider, will not achieve this with a good outcome.





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2. Don't grip the handlebars with a death grip during the climbs and instead allow your torso to help with the rhythm as this will help develop core strength. Good hill climbs develop rhythm which is almost like dancing on the bicycle and they have a nice relaxed grip.
 3. Don't ride with your with elbows fully extended when climbing up the hills as this will mean that your reach on the bike is incorrect and this will cause associated neck and arm / hand pain or pins and needles. A slightly flexed elbow is required for the transition from the seated to standing hill climbs and for emergency braking.

Duration and Frequency

This form of training can be done at least once and up to three times a week BUT must include variations with longer rides, endurance training etc.

Pathways for Further Development

This is not the only form of quick training you should indulge in as there are other methods such as a closed circuit training (your own personal criterium), cross training and isolation methods on the bike.

If you are interested in any of the above methods I will be conducting a number of practical workshops as well as theory ones with BWA in the coming weeks so please register your interest for these at: cycling@pihc.com.au

For specific training methods to suit your individual needs the following pathways are now available:

1. PIHCG Cycling Training Programs in 2013. To get a prospectus please email PIHCG Admin Officer at: cycling@pihc.com.au
2. Individualised Coaching and Mentoring via our Mesocycle Training Programs – get the information document via: cycling@pihc.com.au and if you have specific clinical queries please direct them to ianwee@pihc.com.au

PERTH INTEGRATED HEALTH CYCLING GROUP



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3. Cross Training which takes place the whole year round. To check the next cross training program find us on Facebook.
 4. Bike Ergonomic Assessment for Cyclists with Injuries or underlying conditions with Ian Wee via: ianwee@pihc.com.au

PLEASE PASS THIS ARTICLE ON TO YOUR FRIENDS IN THE CYCLING WORLD AS THIS IS GIFTED TO THE CYCLING COMMUNITY COURTESY OF THE ORGANISERS OF THE CITY OF ARMADALE GRAND FONDO AND THE PERTH INTEGRATED HEALTH CYCLING GROUP.

For more information about Perth Integrated Health Cycling Group go to: www.pihc.com.au and also our programs and events on Facebook under the same name.

Ian Wee
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Ian Wee is Director Sportif of the Perth integrated Health Cycling Group. By profession an occupational therapist focusing on neuromuscular and biomechanical conditions, he is also a bike ergonomist for cyclists at the elite, national, international and recreational level. Ian is also a qualified cycling coach and cycling teacher nationally accredited and also medical classifier for Cycling Australia and the Australian Paralympics Committee. In 2011 he was the finalist for the Bicycling Achievement Award for his work in the professional category of cycling and has recently been treating the Genesys Pro Team here in Perth. Ian is also the Executive Director and Team Practitioner for the #1 National Road Series team champions for three years running – the Huon Salmon Genesys Wealth Pro Racing Team.



Perth Integrated Health Cycling Group